



Focus on Well Tagging Requirements

For Well Operators & Homeowners

Water Resources Program

For more information:

Online visit:
www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wr/wrhome.html
– click on wells

To leave a recorded message, call
1-800-468-0261.

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Background information

The Department of Ecology's well identification program is designed to identify both newly constructed and existing wells. Licensed drillers in Washington State are required to tag all new or reconstructed wells. It is also the homeowner's responsibility to place a well identification tag on every well they own.

Before the well tagging program went into effect, it was difficult for the public to collect or maintain records for their wells, because there was no way of connecting existing records to a particular well. Often, this information is needed when a property is bought or sold. Property owners also may need to collect and maintain data on their wells for water quality protection and water use. Many agencies and organizations also collect, store, and maintain data from wells. This information includes geologic data, static water levels, bacterial analysis, and contaminant tracking.

The well identification program creates a standard (shared) system to uniquely identify wells so that property owners and various agencies can readily share well data. The program also allows homeowners to maintain records for their wells in Ecology's regional offices. In addition, well tags help provide field identification when Ecology staff are trying to locate an individual well.

General instructions relating to well tagging

Well identification tags are made of rigid aluminum, each containing a six-character identification number, much like a license plate. In most cases, the tag is affixed by strapping it to a well casing (six inches or larger) using a radiator clamp or stainless steel strap. The well identification tag should be placed in a readily visible, reasonably permanent location. Whenever possible, it should not be subject to removal or damage during service to the well or pump. If the well has no exposed casing, or it is difficult to access, attach the tag to the most permanent feature of the well, such as a nearby post, the well house, or the concrete pad at the wellhead.



This is an example of a well tag banded to the casing with a stainless steel strap.



Documenting well identification numbers

Ecology's *Water Well Report* and *Resource Protection Well Report* forms have a space for the well identification number. If older forms are used, please write the well identification number in the upper right hand corner. These forms are available at Ecology's regional offices (see sidebar on page one) and are typically filled out by the well driller. The driller submits the appropriate form to Ecology's regional office well drilling coordinator in the area where the well is located. Drillers may also present the well owner with a form letter that explains the well identification program, along with their copy of the well report.

Homeowners tagging their own wells are required to locate the *Water Well Report* or *Resource Protection Well Report* form for their well(s). If no Water Well Report exists for your well(s), contact the Ecology Headquarters office (online or 1-800 number--see sidebar on page one) to find out what steps you can take in getting a report made on your well(s). The homeowner will then affix the tag they request from Ecology and fill out a Well Tagging Form. The Well Tagging Form is available at Ecology's headquarters office. The Form provides Ecology with information about the well description and location.

When decommissioning, or closing down an old well, a well driller is required to remove the well identification tag and attach it to the *Decommissioning Well Report* before sending the form to Ecology.

Important things to remember

- Never compromise the integrity of the well seal when attaching the identification tag.
- Write the well identification number on all pertinent forms, using the space provided, if there is one. For example, homeowners should reference the well identification number on their water quality lab reports.
- Make sure to write the full well identification number on all forms.

If you require this publication in an alternative format, please contact (360) 407-6600 (voice) or (TTY) at 711 or 1-800-833-6388.